

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-10 AID-05 CU-02 /071 W

----- 074384

R 221033Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1581

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, LA

SUBJECT: LAO SPOKESMAN REPORTS ON NOVEMBER 21 CABINET MEETING

REF: VIENTIANE 8443

1. PGNU SPOKESMAN OUDAY SOUVANNAVONG SPENT MOST OF HIS NOVEMBER 22 PRESS CONFERENCE OUTLINING STEPS TAKEN WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT THE NOVEMBER 12 AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES AND STUDENTS WHICH ENDED THE PAKSE STUDENT STRIKE (REFTEL). ACCORDING TO OUDAY, PHENG PHONGSAVAN PRESIDED OVER NOVEMBER 21 CABINET MEETING AND, AS INTERIOR MINISTER, ALSO MADE THE REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDENT AGREEMENT.

2. OUDAY STATED THAT THE PGNU WAS IN FACT CARRYING OUT THE AGREEMENT. IT HAD CLOSED ALL CASINOS IN THE PAKSE AREA EXCEPT FOR ONE WHICH WAS IN A "NO-MAN'S LAND" BETWEEN THAI AND LAO FRONTIER POSTS. THE CABINET HAD, HOWEVER, ORDERED THE CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO SEEK A WAY TO CLOSE THIS CASINO AS WELL.

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3. IN REGARD TO SETTING UP BOUNDARY STAKES IN PAKSE AREA, PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE BY JOINT CENTRAL COMMISSION TO IMPLEMENT THE ACCORDS. DEMARCATION POINT AT BAN ITOU REMAINED AT ISSUE, HOWEVER, AND "HIGHER AUTHORITIES" WOULD HAVE TO MAKE THE DECISION.

4. PGNU INTENDS TO RESPOND TO STUDENTS' DEMAND THAT CORRUPT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BE REMOVED AND WILL SEND A COMMISSION TO SOUTHERN LAOS TO MAKE INVESTIGATIONS.

5. IN QUESTION-AND-ANSWER PERIOD, OUDAY WAS ASKED ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDENTS' DEMAND THAT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BE DISSOLVED. HE REPLIED THAT THIS WAS A SENSITIVE ISSUE AND THE GOVERNMENT WAS STUDYING IT.

6. OUDAY ALSO REPORTED THAT, IN A DECISION UNRELATED TO THE STUDENT STRIKE, THE CABINET HAD DECIDED THAT EFFECTIVE TODAY, NOVEMBER 22, IT WOULD NO LONGER AUTHORIZE THE USE OF FEOF-SUPPLIED FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR THE IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS FOR SLAUGHTER IN LAOS.

7. IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS, OUDAY STATED THAT CABINET HAD APPROVED THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AID AGREEMENT AND THAT DETAILS OF IMPLEMENTATION WOULD BE DECIDED ON BY EXPERTS FROM THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE ALSO SAID A COMMITTEE HAD BEEN FORMED IN THE MINISTRY OF PLAN TO DETERMINE DISTRIBUTION OF AID TO BE RECEIVED FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

8. IN CLOSING, OUDAY SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION THAT RUMORS OF A COUP D'ETAT WERE UNFOUNDED AND THAT BOTH SIDES OF THE PGNU WERE RESOLVED TO SURPRESS ANY SUCH ATTEMPT. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, CABINET MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI08629
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740339-0165
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741118/aaaaaouz.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: VIENTIANE 8443
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07-Aug-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAO SPOKESMAN REPORTS ON NOVEMBER 21 CABINET MEETING
TAGS: PINS, PGOV, LA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005